

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS REGARDING THE HOUSING CHOICE PROGRAM

- Q.** What is the Housing Choice Voucher (HCV) Program ?
- A.** *The Housing Choice Voucher Program was formally known as the Section 8 Program. The voucher program is designed to help low-income families obtain affordable housing and to provide increased housing choices.*
- Q.** Are you accepting applications for the HCV Program?
- A.** *Currently Norfolk Redevelopment and Housing Authority NRHA is not accepting applications; once applications are accepted again it will be announced in the local news papers and at local human services agencies.*
- Q.** How much will NRHA pay on a program participant's behalf?
- A.** *The maximum amount that the Public Housing Authority (PHA) will pay is an amount equal to the payment standard established by Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) for a particular bedroom size minus the family's total tenant payment.*
- Q.** Do I have to pay a security deposit?
- A.** *The PHA does not pay any of the security deposit. The amount of the deposit is determined by the owner of the unit. The deposit may range in an amount up to two months of the total contract rent and it is to be paid prior to you moving in the unit.*
- Q.** How long may a participant remain on the program?
- A.** *A participant remains eligible for the program as long as the PHA has a housing assistance payment (HAP) to pay to the owner and the participant does not violate any program regulations.*
- Q.** How long does a participant have to look for a unit?
- A.** *Vouchers are effective for at least 60 days. Depending on certain circumstances you may apply for an extension for an additional 30 days or longer.*
- Q.** What determines the number of bedrooms I qualify for?

- A.** *NRHA has subsidy standards established that are used to determine the appropriate number of bedrooms for families of different size and compositions.*
- Q.** Where may I use my voucher?
- A.** *You may search for suitable housing anywhere in the City of Norfolk; of if eligible you may use the portability option. You may also continue to live at your present unit. Wherever you decide to live must first be approved by NRHA by the unit being the appropriate size for your family, the rent must be reasonable and the unit must pass a housing quality standard inspection.*
- Q.** What is portability?
- A.** *Portability gives you the option to transfer your voucher anywhere in the United States with a tenant-based HCV Program.*
- Q.** What is my annual recertification?
- A.** *Sometimes called reexamination, the process of securing documentation of total family income used to determine the rent a family will pay for the next 12 months.*
- Q.** What do I do when my income changes?
- A.** *You must report all changes in your income and household composition in person on the ground floor of 201 Granby St., on the 2nd, 3rd, or 4th Tuesday or Thursday each month between the hours of 8:30 a.m. and 12:00 p.m. These days are considered Status Change Days*
- Q.** May I move other people into my assisted unit?
- A.** *You may add others to your household composition; however, they must be approved by NRHA before they may move into your assisted unit. To add others to your household composition they must come with you to the office on the above days and times so that you may complete a status change form. To be added the individual must bring with them a current state issued pictured identification card and a social security card.*
- Q.** Who is responsible for paying my utility bills?
- A.** *You must refer to the executed lease to determine the responsible party. Utilities must be current at all times if the family or the owner is responsible for paying the bill; even when a utility service is not being used because of climate conditions that utility service must be connected and the bill current.*

- Q.** How do I qualify for the HCV Section 8 Program?
- A.** *Submit an application when applications are being accepted. Must meet income guidelines based on the number of people in the household. Must meet screening criteria: Must pass criminal background check. Must not owe any money to the PHA for previous occupancy. Registered sex offenders are not eligible for the program. Persons convicted of manufacturing or producing methamphetamine on the premises of federally assisted housing. Citizenship or eligible immigration status must be established. One will continue to qualify for the program as long they remain in good standing by following the program regulations.*
- Q.** I have property I would like to rent to HCV program participants how do I list my property?
- A.** *Please call our Landlord Liaison at (757) 624-8643 to place your property on our Referral List of properties. This list is provided for HCV participants and the general public. We will advertise your property at no cost for you until it is leased.*
- Q.** How do I select a person to rent my property?
- A.** *Verify that the individual has a voucher by requesting a copy of the voucher
Screen families who apply to determine if they will be good renters as we only conduct criminal background checks.
Consider a family' background rental history by contacting previous landlords.*
- Q.** Once my property is rented what are my responsibilities as a landlord?
- A.** *You must:*
- 1. Responsible for screening families who apply to determine their suitability as renters.*
 - 2. Compliance with terms of the Housing Assistance Payment Contract.*
 - 3. Conduct normal landlord functions during the term of the lease.*
 - 4. Compliance with assisted lease.*
 - 5. Compliance with equal opportunity requirements.*
 - 6. Maintaining housing units by making necessary repairs of acceptable quality in a timely manner.*
 - 7. Must adhere to provisions on modifications to a dwelling unit occupied or to be occupied by a person (s) with disabilities.*
 - 8. May not lease property to a relative (parent, child, grandparent, grandchild, sister, or brother) of any member of the assisted family, unless approved by PHA for handicap accessibility.*

9. *Lease may not require more than sixty (60) days moving notice from tenant.*
10. *The HCV Section 8 office must receive notice as to any rent adjustments in accordance to the lease and at least sixty (60) days prior to date of requested adjustments.*
11. *Collect rents, security deposits, and charges for unit damage by the family due from assisted families and otherwise complying with and enforcing leases.*
11. *Security deposit can not exceed the amount charged to unassisted tenants.*
12. *Payment for owner-supplied utilities and services.*

Q. When will I get paid for allowing the participant to live in my property?

A. *HAP checks are issued between the 1st and the 5th each month as long as the participant remains in good standing with the program and the unit continues to meet HUD Housing Quality Standards.*

Q. Who determines the rent for my property when I rent it to a program participant?

A. *The owner states the contract rent for the property. The PHA will determine if the requested amount by the owner is reasonable by comparing the rent with other unassisted rents of similar size, features and amenities.*

Q. Are there special circumstances for disabled individuals?.

A. *Persons with disabilities may request a reasonable accommodation in order to fully utilize the HCV Program. A reasonable accommodation is a change, exception or adjustment to a rule, policy, practice or service.*

What are the advantages for owner/landlords?

Owners/landlords who participate in the Section 8 Existing Program are able to fill vacancies quickly; housing assistance payments are made by the housing authority directly to the landlord and the owner/landlord retains his/her right to screen and choose the tenant.

Clients Services Occupancy Department is responsible for maintaining the waiting list and determining eligibility for the Norfolk Redevelopment and Housing Authority's Housing Choice Voucher Program and Low-Income Public Housing.

MOST FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS:

Question: Are you currently accepting applications?

Answer: The Housing Choice Voucher Program waiting list is currently closed. The Low-Income Public Housing waiting list is open to applicants that qualify for a 1 or 2 bedrooms Midrise; and 3, 4, 5, 6, and 7 bedroom Family Communities. The applications for our LIPH are taken on Fridays Only at 201 Granby St. Ground Floor between the hours of 9:00 AM and 12:00 PM. The applications may also be downloaded at www.nrha.us.

Question: Is there any other assistance available?

Answer: You may be able to place an application for subsidized housing. You will be able to retrieve the subsidized housing list at www.hud.gov. Indicate under the search mode the city and state of your interest. You will have to contact them directly to see **if** their list is open. You may also obtain a housing referral list directly from our office which is located at 201 Granby Street, Ground Floor, Norfolk, Virginia.

Question: What is my status on the waiting list and why is my number going up and down?

Answer: You may find out your position on the waiting list by calling (757) 314-2665 and following the automated instructions. Your position on the list may change when we update the waiting list, which may cause your number to go up or down. The waiting lists are updated monthly, and the changes reported may affect your status on the list also.

Question: When can I update my application?

Answer: You **must** come in to report your changes in writing on any Wednesday or Friday between 9:00 AM and 12:00 PM at 201 Granby Street, First Floor, Norfolk, Virginia.

Question: When will you pull my name from the wait list?

Answer: We are not certain how long your name will be on the wait list. That would depend on available funds, and the number of availabilities we have. We will notify you by mail when your name is drawn from our list. So please keep your information current in our system.

Question: What will I need when I come in?

Answer: You will need picture identification for all members 18 years of age and older (to conduct a criminal background check), birth certificates and social security cards for all household members, verification of all household income, assets and expenses; marriage certificate, separation paper, death certificate (if applicable), custody/adoption papers (if applicable).

NOTE: Please be sure verification of birth records, picture identification and social security cards match for each member. If they do not, you will have to correct the discrepancy before we can process your application.

Question: Why was I placed back on the waiting list?

Answer: You must meet the preference that is stated on your application at the time of selection. If you do not meet that criterion, your application will be placed back on the waiting list with the updated information. It is very important that you report your changes as they occur.

Question: Why was my name removed from the waiting list?

Answer: Your name will be removed from the waiting list for the following reasons:

1. You did not come in for two scheduled appointments.
2. You did not meet the eligibility criteria during our screening process.
3. You did not respond to the purge (which will let us know if you are still interested in the program(s)).

Question: If my name is removed from the wait list or I do not qualify for the preference stated on my applications, will I be given the opportunity to appeal (informal review).

Answer: All applicants will be given the opportunity to appeal the decision if your name is removed because you missed appointments or you did not meet the eligibility criteria during your screening process.

If you **did not respond to the purge**, you will **not** be given the opportunity for an informal review.

Again, please keep your information current in our system so that we can contact you.